

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An Examiner's Amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 C.F.R. § 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the Issue Fee.

2. Authorization for this Examiner's Amendment was given in a telephonic interview with Ms. Julie Daniels Missud, Reg. No. 51,330, on February 27, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of organizing a plurality of objects, comprising the steps of:

receiving user selections of multiple objects from the plurality of objects;

creating one or more groups of objects from the multiple objects;

for each of the one or more groups of objects:

assigning a set of property names to each of the objects in the group, for properties associated with objects in the group, and each object having the same set of property names;

for each object in the group, assigning property values to the object for the property names, the property values determined from the object content;

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assigning a unique hidden property value for the group to each of the objects in the group;

automatically designating a representative object for each of the groups of objects; searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter, and

for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, returning the representative objects of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members, such that the object is part of a particular one of the one or more groups, if the object was assigned the particular group's hidden property value; and

for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, returning the particular objects, such that object is not part of the one or more groups if the object was not assigned any of the one or more groups' hidden property values;

displaying the returned representative objects of the groups of objects, the returned representative objects improving organization of objects and saving display space; and

displaying the particular objects.

9. (Currently Amendment) An article of manufacture including an information storage medium wherein is stored information for programming a computer to perform a method of organizing a plurality of objects, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving user selections of multiple objects from the plurality of objects;

creating one or more groups of objects from the multiple objects;

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for each of the one or more groups of objects:

assigning a set of property names to each of the objects in the group, for properties associated with objects in the group, and each object having the same set of property names;

for each object in the group, assigning property values to the object for the property names, the property values determined from the object content;

assigning a unique hidden property value for the group to each of the objects in the group;

automatically designating a representative object for each of the groups of objects;

searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter, and

for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, returning the representative objects of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members, such that the object is part of a particular one of the one or more groups, if the object was assigned the particular group's hidden property value; and

for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, returning the particular objects, such that object is not part of the one or more groups if the object was not assigned any of the one or more groups' hidden property values;

displaying the returned representative objects of the groups of objects, the returned representative objects improving organization of objects and saving display space; and

displaying the particular objects.

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17. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for organizing a plurality of objects, comprising:

a processor;

a display device in communication with the processor; and,

a processor readable storage medium in communication with the processor, containing process readable program code for programming the apparatus to perform the method of organizing a plurality of objects, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving user selections of multiple objects from the plurality of objects;

creating one or more groups of objects from the multiple objects;

for each of the one or more groups of objects:

assigning a set of property names to each of the objects in the group, for properties associated with objects in the group, and each object having the same set of property names;

for each object in the group, assigning property values to the object for the property names, the property values determined from the object content;

assigning a unique hidden property value for the group to each of the objects in the group;

automatically designating a representative object for each of the groups of objects;

searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter, and

for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, returning the representative objects of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that

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meet the search parameter are members, such that the object is part of a particular one of the one or more groups, if the object was assigned the particular group's hidden property value; and

for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, returning the particular objects, such that object is not part of the one or more groups if the object was not assigned any of the one or more groups' hidden property values;

displaying the returned representative objects of the groups of objects, the returned representative objects improving organization of objects and saving display space; and

displaying the particular objects.

37. (Currently Amended) A method of organizing a plurality of objects, comprising the steps of:

receiving user selections of multiple objects from the plurality of objects;

creating one or more groups of objects from the multiple objects;

for each of the one or more groups of objects:

assigning a set of property names to each of the objects in the group, for properties associated with objects in the group, and each object having the same set of property names;

for each object in the group, assigning property values to the object for the property names, the property values determined from the object content;

assigning a unique hidden property value for the group to each of the objects in the group;

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automatically designating a representative object for each of the groups of objects;

assigning a first value to each representative object;

assigning a second value to the other objects in each of the groups of objects;

searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter, and

for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, returning the representative objects that are those objects having a first value, of groups of objects for which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members, such that the object is part of a particular one of the one or more groups, if the object was assigned the particular group's hidden property value; and

for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, returning the particular objects, such that object is not part of the one or more groups if the object was not assigned any of the one or more groups' hidden property values;

displaying the returned representative objects of the groups of objects, the returned representative objects improving organization of objects and saving display space; and

displaying the particular objects.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, 24 and 31-44 are allowed over the prior art of record.

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The prior art of record fails to teach or suggest individually or in combination assigning a set of property names to each of the objects in the group, for properties associated with objects in the group, and each object having the same set of property names; for each object in the group, assigning property values to the object for the property names, the property values determined from the object content; assigning a unique hidden property value for the group to each of the objects in the group as set forth independent claims 1, 9, 17 and 37, and changing the representative object of a particular one of the groups of objects; assigning the first value to the changed representative object; and assigning the second value to the other objects in the particular group of objects as set forth in the independent claim 42.

Dependent claims 2, 4-7, 10, 12-14, 16, 18, 20-22, 24, 31-36, 38-41, 43 and 44 being further limiting to the independent claims 1, 7, 17 and 37 respectively are also allowed.

The closest prior art, Kanda et al., US Patent No. 5,894,333 teaches a representative image display method and apparatus comprising of a series of multiple images into which a motion image is formed, and which displays a representative image of each scene, and to motion image search apparatus which execute searches for a motion image using the representative image display apparatus. The closest prior art fails to anticipate or render Applicant's limitations above obvious.

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4. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the Issue Fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the Issue Fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thuy N. Pardo whose telephone number is 571-272-4082. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tim Vo can be reached on 571-272-3642. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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/Thuy N. Pardo/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2168